

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 L-03 H-03 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

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/073 W

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R 211110Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5902

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 8057

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BGEN, AF

SUBJECT: THE DEMISE OF THE KABUL ROTARY CLUB

1. SUMMARY: KABUL BRANCH ROTARY INTERNATIONAL HAS BEEN DECLARED AN ILLEGAL ORGANIZATION BY GOA AND FORCED TO DISBAND. ACTION CONFIRMS PREVIOUSLY-EXPRESSED SUSPICION OF CLUB AS QUOTE FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION UNQUOTE ON PART OF SOME GOA MINISTERS. GOA ACTION HWEN REPORTED TO ROTARY INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS LIKELY BE INTERPRETED AS REFLECTING DAOUD GOVERNMENT'S NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, ESPECIALLY ASSOCIATION WITH PRIVATE FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF INFORMED BY US CITIZEN MEMBERS OF KABUL ROTARY CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS THAT GOA HAS INFORMED THEM CLUB IS ILLEGAL ORGANIZATION AND MUST CEASE ALL OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY. CLUB HAD RECEIVED ORAL PERMISSION TO OPERATE FROM PREVIOUS ROYAL GOVERNMENT. WHEN CLUB PRESIDENT, AN AFGHAN NATIONAL, WROTE TO PRESIDENT DAOUD REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONTINUE TO MEET, PRESIDENT REFERRED MATTER TO DEPFONMIN WAHID ABDULLAH. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION ABDULLAH CONFIRMED TO DCM HIS GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO CLOSE ROTARY BECAUSE OF ITS ILLEGAL STATUS. IN RESPONSE TO DCM
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QUERY RE FUTURE APPROVAL FOR CLUB ABDULLAH INTIMATED THAT DESPITE

CLUB'S REPUTATION FOR PERFORMING GOOD WORKS, TIMING WAS NOT RPT NOT RIGHT FOR APPROVING SUCH A FOREIGN-BASED ORGANIZATION.

3. ROTARY CLUB HAS BEEN ON SHAKY GROUND SINCE JULY COUP. AS EXAMPLE GENERAL NERVOUSNESS OF AFGHAN MEMBERS, IT WAS DECIDED NOT RPT NOT TO HOLD WEEKLY MEETINGS DURING RAMADAN THIS YEAR. NEWS OF CLOSURE CAME JUST AFTER RESUMPTION OF REGULAR MEETINGS.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED PREVIOUS REPORTS THAT VARIOUS GOA MINISTERS INCLUDING INTERIOR MINISTER BELIEVED ALL MEMBERS OF KABUL ROTARY CLUB TO BE QUOTE AGENTS OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS UNQUOTE. AFGHAN MEMBERSHIP REFLECTS CREAM OF MINISCULE PRIVATE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AS WELL AS PROMINENT RESIDENT FOREIGN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL CIRCLES. NOTIFICATION OF CLUB'S DEMISE TO INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS PRESUMABLY WILL REFLECT TO PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY DAOUD GOVERNMENT'S NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. PRESIDENT DAOUD'S JESHYN SPEECH IN AUGUST INTIMATED THERE WOULD BE ROLE FOR PRIVATE BUSINESS IN NEW REGIME BUT UNDER CAREFUL CONTROL AND SUPERVISION HIS GOVERNMENT. UNFORTUNATELY FOR AFGHAN IMAGE TO INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY, ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.
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